

NUTRITION FACTS

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Serving size: ½ cup Alaska Grown asparagus

Amount Per Serving

Calories 15 Calories from Fat 0

% Daily Value*

Total Fat	0g		0%
Saturated Fat	0g		0%
Trans Fat	0g		
Cholesterol	0mg		0%
Sodium	0mg		0%
Total Carbohydrate	3g		1%
Dietary Fiber	1g		4%
Sugars	1g		
Protein	1g		
Vitamin A	10%	Vitamin C	6%
Calcium	2%	Iron	8%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

HEALTH BENEFITS

- Low in calories.
- Contains no fat or cholesterol.
- Very low in sodium.
- A good source of potassium.
- A source of fiber (3 grams per 5.3 oz. serving).
- An excellent source of folic acid.

BUYING AND STORAGE TIPS

Look for odorless stalks that have dry, tight tips, and that are pencil thin to ½ inch thick. Avoid limp or wilted stalks and extra-large, woody spears.

Trim ends off of stems (~¼ inch), wash in warm water, pat dry, wrap a moist paper towel around the stem ends, place in moisture proof wrapping, and refrigerate in crisping drawer. Use within 2-3 days for best quality. They can also be stood upright and placed in 2 inches of cold water.



Kid Connection: Play 'Guess that Vegetable.'

1. Kids close their eyes.
2. Touch their arm or face with a vegetable.
3. Have them GUESS what it is!



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ALASKA asparagus



*Low in calories,
high in vitamins!*

FUN ASPARAGUS FACTS

- Asparagus is a perennial (lives for more than two years) plant.
- It takes three years from seed to first harvest, but can be harvested for approximately 15 years under the right conditions.
- Native to Eastern Mediterranean and Asia Minor areas.
- Member of the lily family, along with onions, garlic, leeks, turnips, and gladioli.
- Romans were the first to cultivate asparagus.
- According to folklore, asparagus has been credited with curing toothaches.
- White asparagus is not genetically induced. It is created by keeping the plants away from sunlight by piling dirt over the spears as they emerge and grow and is one of the most labor intensive vegetables to grow.

~ ALASKA FACT ~

To grow asparagus in Alaska choose warm, well-drained soils, on a south-facing slope.



ASPARAGUS COOKING TIPS

- Saucepan/Steamer: Place asparagus in small amount of boiling water for 5-8 minutes until crisp-tender.
- Stir Fry: Heat wok or skillet to medium high heat. Cut spears into ½ inch pieces leaving the tips whole. Stir Fry pieces in oil or butter for 3-5 minutes, until tender-crisp.
- Microwave: place 1 lb in microwave-safe dish with ¼ cup water and cover tightly. If cooking whole spears, arrange so that tips are in the center. Microwave at 100% power for 4-7 minutes for whole spears and 3-5 minutes for cuts and tips. Stir halfway through cook time.
- To enhance flavor, season with allspice, basil, dill weed, ginger, marjoram, nutmeg, thyme, or lemon juice.
- Add steamed asparagus to your omelet.
- Add to cheese and crackers. Goes well with soft cheese (like goat and brie).
- Create a dipping sauce for the asparagus and have as an appetizer.
- Add to any veggie fettuccine dish.
- Put fresh asparagus, drizzle of olive oil, salt, pepper, and seasonings of your choice in a plastic bag. Shake until asparagus is coated and bake in oven at 400 degrees F until crisp.



PICKLED ASPARAGUS

Makes 2 pints

Ingredients:

30 Alaska Grown asparagus spears
½ cup coarse salt
2 quarts cold water
1 ⅔ cups distilled white vinegar
⅔ cup sugar
1 teaspoon coarse salt
1 teaspoon mustard seed
1 ½ teaspoons dill seed
1 Alaska Grown white onion, sliced into rings
½ teaspoon chili pepper flakes
2 sprigs fresh dill



Directions:

Trim the cut end of the asparagus spears, cut into 3 inch lengths. Place in large bowl with ½ cup salt, cover with water. Let stand for 2 hours. Drain and rinse under cool water, and pat dry. Sterilize two pint size wide mouth jars in simmering water for 5 minutes. In a saucepan over medium heat, combine the vinegar, sugar, 1 teaspoon of salt, mustard seed, dill seed and onion rings. Bring to a boil for one minute.

Pack the asparagus spears tips up in the hot jars leaving ½ of space from the rim. Tuck one dill sprig into each jar, and sprinkle in ¼ teaspoon of red pepper flakes. Pour hot pickling liquid into the jars, filling to within ¼ inch of the rim. Wipe rims with a clean damp cloth, and seal with lids. Process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes.

Cool to room temperature. Check seals when cool by pressing the center of the lid. Label and date; store in a cool dark place. If any jars have not sealed properly, refrigerate and eat within two weeks.

Recipe courtesy:
<http://allrecipes.com/recipe/pickled-asparagus/>